

Message Text

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NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 ACDA-07 IO-13 MCT-01 CU-02

DHA-02 ORM-02 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 OC-06 CCO-00 OPR-02 A-01 SY-05 NEAE-00 /122 W

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O P 061537Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2464

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 178

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

CIA WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

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CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 8729

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE

SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION DECEMBER 4-6

REF: BEIRUT 8700 (DTG 031447Z DEC 76)

1. SUMMARY. PALESTINIANS HOLDING ASF TO 1969 CAIRO ACCORDS ON
HEAVY WEAPONS TURNOVER; RIGHTISTS PROTESTING AGREEMENT OBSOLETE.

QUADRIpartite COMMITTEE MAY MEET DEC 6 OR 7. CLASHES REPORTED

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IN MARJAYUN AREA IN THE SOUTH. SOME PROGRESS REPORTED BY PLO

LEADER IN RESOLUTION OF SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN DIFFERENCES. INCIDENTS
IN BEIRUT MAY RESULT IN ASF INSTITUTION OF CURFEWS IN ADDITIONAL AREAS

OF CITY. PRO-IRAQI BAATH LEADER PROTESTING ASF OCCUPATION OF
HIS OFFICE IN TRIPOLI; CHRISTIANS AND POPULAR SYRIAN PARTY SPAR
IN KURA. SKIRMISH REPORTED IN BEQAA BETWEEN VANGUARDS OF
LEBANESE ARAB ARMY, AIDED BY ASF, AND LOCAL STUDENTS. CONGRESS
OF KATAEB STUDENT SERVICE SUPPORTS BOTH LEBANESE UNITY AND
DECENTRALIZATION. CHAMOUN CONTINUES HARD ANTI-PALESTINIAN
LINE. SPECULATION CONTINUES ON IMMINENT ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW GOVERN-
MENT TO INCLUDE MAINLY TECHNOCRATS. CONFLICTING REPORTS ABOUT
TIMING OF MEETING OF PALESTINIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS. FRENCH
PUBLICLY DENY ALLEGED NOTE EXCHANGES BETWEEN USG AND FRANCE ON
LEBANON. BRITS TO REOPEN EMBASSY VISA SECTION DEC 13. ILO
AND UN REPRESENTATIVES PRESENTLY MEETING WITH LEBANESE LEADERS TO
DISCUSS RECONSTRUCTION. END SUMMARY.

2. TURNOVER OF HEAVY WEAPONS. PALESTINIANS INSISTING ON RETAINING
DEFENSIVE WEAPONS, SUCH AS ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS, WHICH 1973 AMMENDMENTS
TO CAIRO AGREEMENT ALLEGEDLY PERMITTED IN CAMPS. ARGUMENT SUCH WEAPONS

NEEDED AGAINST POSSIBLE ISRAELI ATTACK MAY BE ANSWERED, ACCORDING
TO L'ORIENT, BY FORMAL SYRIAN GUARANTEE OF SECURITY IN CAMPS. ASF
HAS EXTENDED DATE FOR COLLECTION OF HEAVY WEAPONS TO DEC 12. PRESS
REPORTS MIXED PALESTINIAN-ASF COMMITTEES MAY SOON MEET TO WORK
OUT DETAILS OF COLLECTION. AN NAHAR REPORTS DEC 3 AGREEMENT BETWEEN
AL-HAJJ AND ARAFAT PERMITTING PALESTINIANS TO KEEP LIGHT ARMS AND
ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS IN CAMPS, WITH SOME HEAVY ARMS UNDER ASF SUPER-
VISION AND OTHERS TRANSFERRED TO THE SOUTH. NATIONAL MOVEMENT DE-
CLARED DEC 3 ITS READINESS TO TURN OVER HEAVY WEAPONS, PROVIDED
PALESTINIANS ALLOWED KEEP THEIR ARMS. PHALANGE PARTY QUESTIONING
HOW LEBANESE CAN TURN OVER ARMS WHEN "AGRESSOR ALIENS" REFUSE
TO DO SO. PIERRE GEMAYEL STATED THERE "NO POINT IN DISTINGUISHING
BETWEEN OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE WEAPONS...IT...RIDICULOUS TO
MAINTAIN THE IDEA THAT ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS ARE PURELY DEFENSIVE
WEAPONS." QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE, WHICH EXPECTED TO DEAL WITH
HEAVY ARMS QUESTION, EXPECTED TO MEET IN BEIRUT DEC 6 OR 7.

3. SOUTH LEBANON. CLASHES BETWEEN PALESTINIANS/LEFTISTS AND
CHRISTIAN RIGHTISTS REPORTED DEC 3 IN MARJAYUN DISTRICT AFFECTING
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VILLAGES OF RACHIF, TIRI, QULAYA AND AISOUN. PRESS REPORTS ISRAELI
GROUND FORCES CONCENTRATED OPPOSITE BINT JBAYL. ACCORDING TO RESS,
MEETING TOOK PLACE DEC 4 AT KHYAM BETWEEN RIGHTISTS AND LEFTISTS
TO BRIDGE THEIR DIFFERENCES AFTER CHRISTIAN MILITIA AT QULAYA
DELIVERED ULTIMATUM TO KHYAM LEFTISTS TO GIVE UP THEIR HEAVY
WEAPONS. WE UNDERSTAND LEFTISTS HAD EARLIER ATTACKED CHRISTIANS
BUT WERE REPELLED, WITH ISRAELIS GIVING CHRISTIANS ARTILLERY SUPPORT.
WE ALSO UNDERSTAND THAT NEUTRALIST CHRISTIANS AT KHYAM SOUGHT AND

OBTAINED FINANCING BY AL-HAJJ. SOME 150
SUDANESE TROOPS ARRIVED BEIRUT BY AIR DEC 4 AND ADDITIONAL NON-
SYRIAN FORCES EXPECTED VIA DAMASCUS. SPECULATION IS THESE TROOPS,
PLUS SMALL NUMBER OF SYRIANS, WILL CONSTITUTE FORCE OF SOME 2,000
TO OCCUPY TYRE AND NABATIYAH. PRESS NOTES DEC 5 ISRAELI GOVERN-
MENT COMMUNIQUE INDICATING ISRAEL REFUSES TO "RETURN TO THE SITUATION
PREVALENT BEFORE THE CIVIL WAR." L'ORIENT-LE JOUR NOTES ARAFAT,
WHO NOW IN BELGRADE, SAID EXPLOSIVE SITUATION IN SOUTH DUE TO INTER-
NATIONAL FORCES, PARTICULARLY THE US, WHICH CONTINUES IGNORE EXIST-
ENCE AND RIGHTS OF PALESTINIAN PEOPLE. WE UNDERSTAND IRAQIS
GRADUALLY LEAVING LEBANON, BUT THAT SOME 2,500 REMAIN, MOSTLY
MOVING TOWARDS THE SOUTH.

4. PALESTINAIN-SYRIAN RELATIONS. PRESS SPECULATES PROGRESS MADE
IN RESOLVING SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN DIFFERENCES, NOTING PLO LEADER
ABU MAHER DESCRIBED AS "POSTIVE" MEETING BETWEEN ARAFAT AND
PRESIDENT ASAD LAST WEEK. MAHER REPORTED TO PLO LEADERSHIP
DEC 4 PROGRESS IN COORDINATING SYRIAN-PALESTINIAN CONTACTS, ON
RESUPPLYING PALESTINIAN UNITS AND ON MOVEMENT OF PALESTINIAN UNITS
FROM ONE LOCATION TO ANOTHER. THERE STILL DISAGREEMENT, HOWEVER,
ON DEFINITION OF HEAVY WEAPONS.

5. INCIDENTS IN BEIRUT. ACCORDING TO KATAEB RADIO, ASF CONSIDERING
ESTABLISHMENT OF CURFEW IN CEERTAIN ADDITIONAL AREAS OF THE CITY AS
RESULT OF SEVERAL RECENT INCIDENTS. DEC 4 A CAR WAS BLOWN UP BY
IMPROVISED TIME BOMB IN MOUSSAYTHAH, ABOUT 100 METERS FROM HOME
OF KAMAL JUNBLATT (WHO WAS IN SHUF FOR WEEKEND). FOUR PEOPLE
REPORTEDLY KILLED AND 24 WOUNDED. A LANDROVER USED TO DELIVER
NEWSPAPERSS AND MAGAZINES BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BEIRUT WAS BLOWN UP
DEC 3 IN EAST BEIRUT. AL MUHARRIR REPORTS TWO HEAVY EXPLOSIONS
HEARD NIGHT DEC 5 IN SOUTHERN SUBURBS, BUT SOURCE UNKNOWN. ANOTHER
INCIDENT INVOLVED FIRE THE NIGHT OF DEC 4-5 IN OFFICES OF LAA AT
MAZRAA BUT THIS APPARENTLY DUE TO ELECTRICAL SHORT CIRCUIT RATHER
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THAN SABOTAGE. AL MUHARRIR CLAIMS CHRISTIANS IN EAST BEIRUT STILL
OPERATING NUMBER OF ROADBLOCKS AND PREVENTING RETURN OF EARLIER
INHABITANTS TO AREAS OF NABAA, MASLAKH AND KARANTINA.

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6. THE NORTH: TENSIONS IN TRIPOLI AND THE KURA. ASF TROOPS ENTERED HOME OF DR ABEL RAFII, DEPUTY FROM TRIPOLI AND LEADER OF PRO-IRAQI BAATH PARTY, AND OCCUPIED HIS PARTY OFFICE IN TRIPOLI, ARRESTING TWO OF HIS AIDES. AL BAYRAQ REPORTED OVER 50 PERSONS ARRESTED IN TRIPOLI ALLEGEDLY IN CONNECTION WITH ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT ON SYRIAN FONMIN KHADDAM. AFTER CONVOY OF SOME 200 VEHICLES RETURNED DEC 4 TO KURA VILLAGE OF AMYUN WITH PPS (POPULAR SYRIAN PARTY) MEMBERS,

CHRISTIANS CHARGE PPS MEMBERS TORE UP LEBANESE FLAG TO PROVOKE THEM.

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CAMILLE CHAMOUN CONDEMNED PROVOCATIONS "OF THE COMMUNISTS AND THEIR ALLIES WHO HAVE RETURNED TO CHEKKA AND AMYUN." PPS CLAIM CHRISTIAN MILITIAS FIRED SEVERAL MORTAR ROUNDS AT THEM, IN SPITE OF THEIR ASF ESCORT. AL MUHARRIR REPORTS ASF DECISION DEC 5 TO PERMIT ONLY FORMER RESIDENTS AND JOB HOLDERS TO ENTER KURA DISTRICT.

7. CLASH IN THE BEQAA. CLASH OCCURRED IN SOUTH BEQAA VILLAGE OF JEB-JANNIN OVER OCCUPATION OF A BUILDING BY VANGUARDS OF LEBANESE ARAB ARMY. AFTER VERBAL EXCHANGE WITH OWNER, VANGUARDS FIRED ON HIS DEPARTING CAR AND CRITICALLY INJURED HIM. STUDENTS DEMONSTRATED DEC 4 AGAINST INCIDENT. CLASH FOLLOWED VANGUARDS AND ASF EFFORT TO DISPERSE DEMONSTRATORS, IN WHICH ONE MAN KILLED AND FIVE WOUNDED.

8. PHALAANGIST STUDENT CONGRESS. THE 14TH CONGRESS OF KATAEB STUDENT SERVICE (SEK) MET OVER WEEKEND, PRESIDED OVER BY LOUIS HENEINE AND ATTENDED BY BECHIR GEMAYEL. EXPECTED ANNOUNCE DEC 6 NUMBER OF RESOLUTIONS, INCLUDING OPPOSITION TO ACTIONS WHICH WOULD UNDERMINE LEBANESE NATIONAL UNITY, BUT DEMANDING ESTABLISHMENT OF BRANCHES OF WEST BEIRUT UNIVERSITIES IN EASTERN SECTOR, "WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF DECENTRALIZATION WHICH THE KATAEB PARTY SUPPORTS."

9. CHAMOUN'S HARD LINE. CAMILLE CHAMOUN ADDRESSED GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR 150 NLP MILITIA AT BEIT MERY DEC 5. HE SAID THERE WILL BE NO TRUE PEACE IN LEBANON AS LONG AS ARMED PALESTINIA ORGANIZATIONS CONTINUE TO EXIST.

10. FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT. AN NAHAR EXPECTS 6-8 MEMBER CABINET TO BE NAMED DEC 7, COMPOSED OF TECHNOCRATS, AND WILL BE A "TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT" UNTIL SUCH TIME AS A GOVERNMENT OF POLITICIANS CAN BE FORMED. IN ADDITION TO SALIM AL-HUSS AS PRIME MINISTER, SPECULATIONS ON MINISTERIAL POSITIONS INCLUDE: FUAD BOUTROS, FOREIGN AFFAIRS, METRI NAMAR, PUBLIC WORKS; CHAFIC MOHARRAM, FINANCE; GABY LAHOUD, DEFENSE; AND RIDA WAHID, SOCIAL AFFAIRS.

11. PALESTINIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS. JERUSALEM AFP REPORTS GOI CLAIM CONGRESS HAS BEEN POSTPONED FOR SEVERAL MONTHS. HOWEVER, AFP CAIRO QUOTES PLO POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF QADDOUMI AS SAYING COUNCIL WILL MEET IN JANUARY IN CAIRO. SAIQA SECRETARY GENERAL
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ZOUHEIR MOHSEN SAID TALK OF MEETING IS PREMATURE.

12. ALLEGED US-FRENCH NOTES EXCHANGE ON LEBANON. FRENCH GOVERNMENT PUBLICLY DENIED TO LEBANESE DEPUTIES IN PARIS THAT ALLEGED NOTES WERE EXCHANGED, HOWEVER, POLITICAL REACTION IN BEIRUT CONTINUES.

CAMILLE CHAMOUN SPOKE DISPARAGINGLY OF POSSIBILITY OF PRESIDENTIAL REGIME IN DEBANUN. SOME CONSERVATIVE MOSLEM LEADERS APPLAUDED IDEA THAT OLD "PRINCES" OF LEBANESE POLITICS SHOULD BE SUPPLANTED.

13. BRITS TO RENEW CONSULAR ACTIVITIES. THE BRITISH EMBASSY ANNOUNCED DEC 6 THAT, STARTING DEC 13, ITS VISA SECTION WILL REOPEN. WE UNDERSTAND BEA REFUSING TO FLY TO BEIRUT BEFOREHAND.

14. RECONSTRUCTION. REPRESENTATIVES OF INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION AND UN ECONOMIC COMMITTEE FOR WEST ASIA ARE PRESENTLY HOLDING MEETINGS IN BEIRUT WITH LEBANNESE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, INCLUDING LABOR MINISTER TUEINI, TO DISCUSS ASSISTANCE TO LEBANON. DISCUSSIONS ARE EXPECTED TO LAST FOR APPROXIMATELY THREE WEEKS. BEIRUT PORT MAY RECOMMENCE SOME ACTIVITIES IN MID-DECEMBER.
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